A
fter a decade of Stephen Harper, the arrival of Justin Trudeau felt like a re-
lief. But as Canadians reckon with the gulf between the dazzling promise of
Trudeau’s election and the grim reality of his government, journalist Martin Lukacs
makes the case that “real change” was never on the table.

Drawing on investigative research and first-hand reporting, he reveals that behind
the new wave of Trudeaumania was a slick status-quo political machine, backed by
a cast of corporate elites and lobbyists who expected a pay-off from Liberal rule in
Ottawa.

Lukacs exposes a climate plan hatched in collaboration with Big Oil, the arming
of a bloody Saudi war in Yemen, a reconciliation industry that has masked ongoing
theft of Indigenous lands, and the sell-off of public infrastructure to private profi-
teurs—a re-branded continuation, not a break, from Harper’s legacy.

But as the Trudeau formula unravels, Lukacs warns that right-wing scapegoating
politicians are misdirecting this growing discontent with the established order. The
only way to defeat the rise of an ugly right—and fulfill the hopes betrayed by Justin
Trudeau—is an unapologetically bold response to inequality, racism, and climate
breakdown.

Martin Lukacs is an investigative journalist who has covered Canadian politics for
more than a decade. He has been an environmental writer for *The Guardian*, and
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Twitter.